



# magonia

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## WHO'S WATCHING THE UFOLOGISTS...?

So finally abductions have joined adultery, ambition and AIDS as fit subjects for the TV soap operas. The final scene of *The Colbys* as one of the female characters was enticed aboard a cut-price Spielberg saucer produced reactions ranging from bafflement to hilarity (and not much between) amongst the viewing public. Now we hear that other soaps, including our own dear *Crossroads* are falling over themselves to work this jolly wheeze into their plotlines.

So be it. But where, ever again, will we find the touchingly naive abductee who, so the investigators tell us, knew nothing at all about abductions before their traumatic adventure. Now - as far as Western Europe and the USA are concerned - abductions are part of the common currency of pub-talk and back-yard debate. But weren't they ever so? Two important new books\* offer some suggestions.

Whitley Streiber's book, for all the hoop-la that surrounded its release, in some ways raises the fewest questions: either you believe it or you don't. I have been surprised by how adamant some commentators have been that the book is 'clearly fiction', to quote one. I suspect some of the hostile reaction from within the UFO ranks has not been untainted with sour grapes. A million-dollar advance and umpteen weeks in the US best sellers is dispiritingly more than most UFO authors can expect, and to make things worse he is not even a member of the union! Instead of working his way through the ranks of unpaid magazine articles and derisory royalties from books which were not so much released as escaped, the man arrives as a fully fledged professional writer and sews up a massive financial deal taking the bread from the mouths of starving ufologists. He *must* be a phoney!

Maybe, but I see no reason why. His story rings true. And that brings up the question: 'true' to what? Well, true to the confused and disorganised state that most UFO abductees find themselves in. Although Streiber uses his professional talents to hone his

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# PETER ROGERSON'S Northern Echoes



In an article in *New Scientist*, Phil Klass recently lamented the absence of trained scientists in ufology. Surely one of the great attractions of ufology and psychological research is that they are underground 'peoples' sciences', safely immune from being included in some state sponsored 'core curriculum'. Of course, many practitioners purport to think otherwise, and societies (spurred on by charity laws and special status) are made as bureaucratic as possible. The SPR's attempts to become (or remain) "academically respectable" are well known to our readers (though class exclusiveness was a major factor here). ASSAP and BUFORA also wage persistent but (fortunately) never quite successful campaigns to become boring learned societies. Quite right too, because if they did you may be sure that there would be no room for the likes of you and me in them!

The psychologist Dorothy Rowe has pointed out that, all societies need enemies: "...the only way we perceive and define is in terms of contrasts, and since we must live in groups, as individual isolation destroys us,

we define our groups in terms of those excluded from our group..."

These enemies are assimilated into the wilderness: every tribe sees itself as 'The People', versus 'The Others'. The great ideological religions (with which are included Marxism and Rationalism) see heretics, pagans and idolators everywhere. Yet today with weapons of genocidal capacity, humankind can no longer be divided into warring camps, the next stage of human society, the commonwealth of humankind, is needed.

In order to know what it is to be *really* human, cutting across all ethnic, cultural and ideological boundaries, we need to be continually confronted with a powerful image of the non-human. The myth of the UFO and extra-terrestrial invasion may not just be the authorised myth, but the necessary myth of our times.

The abductees paint the image of the non-human by giving to the impersonal, inhuman forces of wild nature, the mask of modern society, as exemplified by a technocratised medicine which treats human beings as mere objects. Against this external force, all humankind is part of 'The People'.

Abductees report that they have been made pregnant by the non-humans (thus is the threat of 'The Other' brought to the core of our very being), or had a foetus 'taken' by the creatures, to be raised amongst them, as was the legendary child of the Great Selchie and the earthly nurse. Although as yet (?) no abductee has been vouchsafed the prophecy that she will marry "an airman true", who will shoot down the flying saucer carrying "thy own wee babe"

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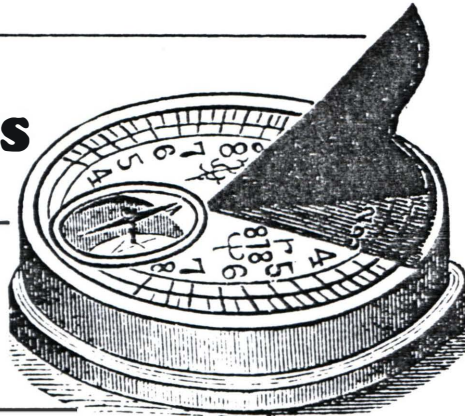
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CHEQUES TO "JOHN RIMMER" PLEASE



# MISSING TIME MISSING LINKS

## Dennis Stillings



After the first day's sessions of the fourth annual meeting of the Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE), several ufologists and I repaired to the motel bar to continue a variety of discussions begun earlier in the day.

After a few minutes it became quite clear that I was the only one present who did not accept the extraterrestrial hypothesis (ETH) to account for certain aspects of the UFO phenomenon. I brought up a few of my arguments against the ETH with the result that the rest of the group tended to shuffle their chairs away from me and lean in toward one another to exchange meaningful anecdotes. I got the impression that I was odd man out in a living replay of *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. ('Go back to your room, Dennis, your pod is waiting for you!')

Perhaps my reference to Lawson's 'birth memory' theory<sup>1</sup> amounted to a kind of intellectual B.O. Lawson proposes that UFO 'abduction' cases are '...archetypal fantas[ies] involving belief or deception in which an individual's birth memories play a central role'. Mentioning this theory provoked loud scoffing and snorts. (In my experience, the mere mention of Lawson's theory has provoked, without exception, excessively emotional responses from ETHers.) I replied that name-calling would not suffice. In what way, precisely, was Lawson incorrect? I was ignored.

As I sat there in my self-induced loneliness, I heard, from the corner of my ear, references to Budd Hopkins' *Missing Time*. I have the book, which I obtained at the last Fortean meeting in Nebraska. I decided to read it through.

Hopkins' book is quite readable. He believes in the ETH, and his thinking clearly reflects his choice of position. One of the mainstays of the ETH rationale is that the ufonauts are so far beyond us in their advanced thinking that what to us appears as absurd<sup>2</sup> is merely the result of our intellectual inadequacies in the face of overwhelming mental superiority — rather like confrontations with cosmic Zen masters.

Such thinking, of course, has its analogies in religion (Q: 'Why were the innocent children killed?' A: We cannot understand such things. Only God, in His infinite wisdom...') and in politics ('You can't question LBJ's policies on Vietnam. He has access to special information...'). In other words, this argument might be true, but it gets us nowhere. We have to operate with the information we have — what you see is what you get.

**"Go back to your room, Dennis,  
your pod is waiting for you!"**

Actually, there is a symbolic reason for the popularity of the 'higher reason' argument. Khidr is an important figure in Islamic mysticism.<sup>3</sup> He appears in the Eighteenth Sura of the Koran, entitled 'The Cave'. Interestingly enough for our discussion here, the entire sura is taken up with a rebirth mystery. The 'cave' is a place of transformation where people experience 'missing time'. Khidr, also known as 'the Angel of the Face', who is a symbol for the self, takes the form of a 'round fish lacking bones and skin'.

In the legend Khidr changes from the 'fish' form to his original form and sits on an island on a throne consisting of light.<sup>4</sup> Khidr

indulges in 'incomprehensible deeds' that are meant to puzzle the observer. In the end, his mysterious behaviour is explained by him in reasonable and comprehensible terms.

Jung remarks that these '...incomprehensible deeds...show how ego-consciousness reacts to the superior guidance of the self through the twists and turns of fate. To the initiate who is capable of transformation it is a comforting tale; to the obedient believer, an exhortation not to murmur against Allan's incomprehensible omnipotence. Khidr symbolizes...the higher wisdom...'

The symbolism of Khidr is replete with analogies to the UFO phenomenon and to the mental states of ETH believers. One may scoff at the reasoning of those who hold to the ETH, but their attitude is one of piety and submission<sup>5</sup> in the face of what appears to be transcendent power and wisdom — qualities never far from foolishness and the absurd. It is even probable that the UFO phenomenon is related to the resurgence of Islam.<sup>6</sup>

The second linchpin of typical ETH reasoning is the 'anthropocentric argument'. When people raise the question: 'Why don't the ETs land on the White House lawn and ask to see the president?', this is anthropocentric. When the ETH'er comes up with his own 'explanation', it is not. Let me give you just one example from Hopkins (page 218): 'It is irrelevant to raise the kind of objection that goes like this: "If extraterrestrials are really here, why do they bother with six-year-old children when they can land publicly and talk

to our presidents and our scientists?'<sup>7</sup> As if Ronald Reagan or Jimmy Carter, or, for that matter, Carl Sagan or Robert Jastrow, must inevitably be central to *their* concerns. Maybe yes, but equally conceivably, maybe no. Perhaps their kind of *preliminary* investigation requires monitoring a wide range of people over their entire lifetimes...<sup>8</sup> As you can see, the relatively common-sense notion of the ufonauts contacting our heads of government is considered anthropocentric and worthy of sarcasm, while Hopkins' pro-ETH 'explanation' is not.

We have to start somewhere, and — inadequate though they may be — our own reason and experience



must be applied to such problems before we go soaring off into the ozone of endless speculation. Hopkins' book is full of this kind of double standard. There is no need to multiply examples. Suffice it to say, the logic of the matter is this: if you object to an argument because it is anthropocentric, you automatically remove the subject from discussion. All human explanations are 'anthropocentric', strictly speaking. Again, a useless approach.

I am convinced that, for many people, concern with the phenomena of UFOs induces a nonrational state of a typical sort. Let me give you an example. Hopkins' book documents several cases in which people have been abducted against their will, hypnotized, operated on, scarred for life, terrorized and subjected to the investigations of ufologists. To all this, Hopkins remarks: 'For all any of us knows the whole UFO phenomenon may be ultimately, blissfully benign - there is firm evidence for this position - and so having been abducted may have turned out to be a peculiar privilege. No one knows'. *Damned* peculiar privilege, I'd say.

#### The 'absurd' birth memory theory

Of course, the 'birth memory theory' is 'absurd'. When Hopkins' subjects, under hypnosis, report 'The walls around the room are curved...It's like a big oval. It has a really calming effect, being in this room...It's almost like being hypnotized...you feel as if you could float. It's very peaceful. And there is not a

could be that somebody was in a different room and talking to me but, um -- it was though I was in a room by myself...'

Now...Lawson may be wrong, but his suggestion that birth memories might be involved is not absurd and deserves consideration.

#### The surgical skills of the ETs

The surgical skills of the ETs are poor. For all their advanced science, they seem to be unable to perform the simplest procedures without creating severe pain and anxiety. They scar patients for life, both emotionally and physically. Yet they are to be considered 'benign'. According to Hopkins, ETs may have a '20,000-year' jump on us. Considering the advances we have made in less than 100 years, an uninterrupted 20,000 years of technological and spiritual progress should produce surgical techniques of the order of teleporting of tissue.

Certainly pain-free surgery should be old hat. Even we poor benighted humans can perform quite serious surgical procedures with little or no pain. The implantation of a cardiac pacemaker, for one example, can be accomplished with local anaesthesia on an outpatient basis. The stories of bleeding cuts on the bodies of abductees after the experience do not impress me. I have received cuts on many occasions, even deep, 'surgical' ones, that were painless and without apparent cause. I simply assume that I came in contact with something

economy of a person undergoing a psychological transformation of a typical sort -- perhaps that very transformation traditionally referred to as 'rebirth'.

The ancient and collective nature of this type of experience is symbolically indicated by the uniformity of the physical appearance of the 'ETs' (they are quasi-instinctive). Their constant dinging around with the earth and with human (and plant and animal) bodies is symbolic of the fact that they have not attained full manifestation 'in the flesh' and have not as yet entered into the individual's new adaptation to the world. The 'ETs' are, metaphorically speaking, testing the new, unaccustomed waters of physical existence in space and time.

Such 'births into the body' may be compared to the image of Christ in the manger -- the cave, the abode of animals (instincts). This timeless image for the birth of a new principle in the human psyche precisely corresponds to much of the symbolism of ET/ufological speculation, hence the 'birth imagery' and all the glorious crank speculations about Christ being an extraterrestrial. Since these 'components' come from a region where ordinary concepts of space, time, pain and death do not exist, they have no way of relating to the problems of the 'abductee'. This is a symbolic process at the deepest level.

Anyone who finds himself a centre for this kind of attention will be in the midst of some remarkable events. That stigmata may be produced would not be too surprising.

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***Now...Lawson may be wrong, but his suggestion that birth memories might be involved is not absurd and deserves consideration.***

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sound. Nothing. I think it's the quietest place I was ever in. This table...grows out of the floor. And...it's a perfect temperature, so I'm perfectly comfortable' (page 80). And, on page 173, 'BH: You say this face had a foetus-like look? PO: Yes...sort of like an embryo...and also, I did have the impression of blood vessels...'

And on page 139 we have the following abductee report of sensations in the UFO laboratory: 'I have a visual image of soft colours, pearl-grays with some blue or mauve...but a kind of textured feeling, like leather and velvet, you know those kinds of nice, smooth comfortable textures, but I don't have...it

sharp while my attention was elsewhere. On one occasion, when there was a particularly long, deep, mysterious cut in my elbow and forearm, I figured out the cause - it was not obvious, but it was not anomalous either. In the profoundly altered states in which the 'abductees' experience their 'encounters', it requires no great strain of the imagination to suppose that these 'stigmata' are self-inflicted, either accidentally, or in such a way as to correspond to the symbolic nature of the experience.

The putative ETs have all the earmarks of human psychic components in symbolic form, which are in the process of manifesting in the psychic

The accounts of the 'abductees' are replete with descriptions of the ETs silently acting out scenes without paying particular attention to the observer. This is a characteristic of dreams.

There are distortions of time and space, often accompanied by lacunae in the sequences of events. In describing his tour through the inside of a UFO, one subject remarked (page 78): 'It's funny, this thing didn't look that big from the outside'. One is reminded of the Charles Finney story of the Circus of Dr Lao. The circus tent (=UFO?), from the outside, is of quite modest proportions. Inside, it becomes almost a small cosmos. Hopkins cites one of the lacunae in a sequence of events: 'When he first entered the...room, he



walked towards the table. ...The next moment, he was seated on the table nearly naked, and his clothes were nowhere to be seen. One can speculate either that he has repressed the disturbing experience of being stripped and lifted onto the table, or that he may have been, in fact, unconscious during that operation.' (page 85)

My explanation would be that we are dealing with a dream mechanism where such sequences are quite common. I need scarcely point out the relevance of this scene to the 'birth memory' hypothesis. It is of special interest that the subject in this abduction case reported: 'I feel like a frog' (page 84). One is reminded of the foetal leg positions as well as those of the neonate. Women often refer to infants affectionately as 'little frogs'. The subject also felt 'physically dirty, and wanted very much to shower' (page 86). Hint, hint. One of Hopkins' subjects even says: 'It seemed like a dream sequence. That's what it seemed like. It seemed like a dream sequence. It didn't quite all come out together'. What you see is what you get. You have here a remembered dream. Let's give the abductee some credit and take what he reports for what it is.

It should be pointed out, however, that these are not average dreams. They are archetypal dreams, or 'big dreams' as primitives call them. Therefore, the subjects who have these very strong and impressive dreams feel them to be different in quality from ordinary dreams. They are quite right. Another of Hopkins' subjects puts this experience this way: 'It's almost like it's a dream. In fact, maybe I thought it was a dream except, except I'd never had a dream like that!\* ...The place is like a dream...'

Dozens of examples of dreamlike qualities can be found in the accounts given by the abductees examined by Hopkins. Nevertheless, Hopkins refuses to entertain this quite obvious alternative explanation. That many people present essentially the same dream is no problem. The meaning of UFOs and ETs is archetypal and may be expected to repeat a very similar pattern.

Some of Hopkins' subjects appear to have hit upon the technique of 'active imagination'. This technique<sup>3</sup> allows one to go into a kind of 'waking dream', in which an imaginary play is carried out before one's 'eyes', having the same sort of autonomous

character as a movie or living diorama. One of Hopkins' subjects, giving his impressions of an ET medical examination, reports on an 'eye-like' device as follows (page 171): 'I never have just a stationary image, but I get a sort of initial quick impression and then it starts degrading into all other kinds of things'. This is a typical subjective experience in active imagination.

The subject continues (page 175): 'I was just trying this time to tell you whatever just sort of popped into my mind. It was very much just kind of a collage of impressions... There was not any kind of sequential thing... There was not any involvement, really, or the feeling I was reliving anything... rather that I was acting as an observer'. And, further on: 'It was not a bright room, and, oh, I don't recall any brightness at all, but that's the image my mind is creating now'. This is active imagination pure and simple.

The experience of active imagination is initiated by a sort of *abaissement du niveau mentale*, a lowering or 'relaxation' of consciousness. Certain exterior conditions are very favourable for the production of such states. Walking through the area where one 'abduction' took place, Hopkins himself remarks on the 'eerie, slumbering quality' of the grounds (page 183). A second subject of Hopkins reports on hearing her name called in the woods' (page 202).

I have had this experience myself in the deep woods of Montana. The unconscious is, in compensatory fashion, reaffirming the person's identity. This reaction is brought forth from the unconscious to counteract the well-known tendency for consciousness to fragment under conditions of isolation. Such a reaction, and its strength, are relative to the degree of isolation experienced and to the strength of the individual ego-consciousness. These conditions cited by Hopkins are optimal for inducing active imagination.

Once one becomes familiar with these altered states of consciousness, the ETM as supported by cases such as those presented in *Missing Time* loses considerable credibility. Anyone who stumbles onto this technique is very impressed by it. I know I was at first, and I spent one whole night just recording the incredibly vivid images that forced themselves on my mind. You can do active imaginations about dragons, unicorns, what have you, and you will find that they are very typical and a slight personal variation on something that can be looked up in a fairy-tale book. Nowadays we have high-tech fairy tales.

ETs: cockroaches of the cosmos or, when the world gets the DTs we start seeing ETs

The UFO phenomenon, broadly speaking, is a *monstrum compositum*. Within the range of UFO phenomena, we see the organic,



BUDD HOPKINS



the inorganic, psychic events, and physical traces: also myths and fairy tales. The UFO phenomenon covers the full range of meaning and aesthetic appeal from the banal and ridiculous to the highest spiritual levels. At times aspects of the phenomenon can be described as fishlike,<sup>11</sup> birdlike,<sup>12</sup> insectlike,<sup>13</sup> and any combination of these features. It is of no avail to try to find out which of these things the UFO is. It is all of them. The composite nature of UFO imagery indicates that it arises from the deepest layers of the collective unconscious.<sup>14</sup>

This does not mean it is merely psychic. At some point in the collective unconscious the

time, perhaps, in the history of the world, there is a universal threat of extinction. We should expect the strongest sort of evolutionary response to this emergency.

This response cannot extend over the long periods of time usually available for such changes. The changes must occur within decades. The vulnerability of consciousness makes it the prime target for fast evolutionary change, a change so rapid that it has to overload the circuits, producing a vast array of overdetermined imagery with a wide spectrum of effects. The effects produced may result in higher consciousness, but not necessarily.

**If nature has access to our minds  
-- and she does --  
would not consciousness be the most  
vulnerable point at which to attack  
and disable the species threatening  
the entire natural world**

psychic meets the hylic,<sup>15</sup> and the usual categories disappear. Someone once said: 'A trick, if it's done right, doesn't look like a trick, it looks real'. If the UFO phenomenon were exclusively psychic or exclusively physical in nature, it would not capture our attention the way it does. It is part of 'the message' that the phenomenon cannot be clearly categorized. When one does clearly categorize the phenomenon, one begins to suffer from UFO-lobotomy: one loses the ability to think critically about the subject, one falls into self-contradiction, forgets contradictory data, develops quasi-theological sophistries to 'explain' the absurd behaviour of the UFOs -- in effect, one meets his pod. In my opinion, there is no small evidence that this fate has befallen the ETHers.

If we look at the ETs with any kind of objectivity at all, we see them as buzzing, expressionless, more or less indistinguishable creatures with little or no feeling for their human victims -- like large insects with rudimentary tools for probing the bodies of the abductees as they probe the ground for soil samples -- leaving their peculiar insect bites and 'traces'.

We are living in stressful times, not just for us, but for the whole planet. If nature has access to our minds -- and she does -- would not consciousness be the most vulnerable point at which to attack and disable the species threatening the entire natural world? For the first

When I see some of the responses to the UFO phenomenon like, for instance, the ETH, I suspect that nature may be creating false *fascinosas* that keep our eyes glued upward until we fall of some cliff into the sea. Then the world will once again be at peace. ●●●

#### NOTES

1. Alvin H. Lawson, 'UFO abductions or birth memories?', *Fate*, March 1985, pp. 68-80. See also *Magonia* new series 10.
2. The behaviour of UFOs and their pilots is truly a 'dance of the absurd'. For important comments on the function of the absurd in general, see my 'Note on the function of nonsense', *Archaeus*, 3, 1 (summer 1985), and for observations on the 'absurd' in relation to UFOs, see Jacques Vallée, *Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults*, Berkeley, And/Or Press, 1979, *passim*.
3. For a full discussion of the Khidr legend see C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, *Collected Works*, 9, 1, New York, Pantheon Books, 1959, pp. 135-147.
4. Jung's Sufi headman of his safari through Kenya told him that Khidr might appear to Jung as a 'pure, white light'. The headman himself reported he had dreamt of Khidr as a 'bright white light near the door'. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
5. As the nuclear crisis is a backdoor reinstallation of the original 'fear of God', the UFO phenomena seem to be designed to reacquaint us with a wide range of other religious virtues.
6. Undoubtedly, Islam is possessed of a new dynamism. This is negatively expressed in Khomeini, but Islam, as the youngest of the world's great religions, has its fulfilment still in the future. Jung has commented on this, and Anthony

Burgess in his novel *1985* predicts an Islamic Britain by the end of the century. Wild, you say? Have you noticed our change in attitudes towards virginity, pornography and alcohol?

7. That UFOs do not manifest definitively to the organizational power structures is part of the archetypal myth. There is no room for the 'principle of salvation' in the Inn. It appears first to shepherds in the fields.

8. See also Stanislov Grof, *Realms of the Human Unconscious*, New York, Viking Press, 1975. The possibility of the remembrance of the birth process, especially in connection with violence, is supported by Edward C. Whitmont in his book *Return of the Goddess*, New York, Crossroad, 1982, pp. 17-18.

9. For the original discussion of the concept of active imagination (term not used), see C.G. Jung, 'The transcendent function', in *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, *Collected Works*, 8, New York, Pantheon Books, 1960, pp. 67-91. Discussions of the nature and function of active imagination can be found throughout the Jungian literature.

10. A book was written years ago on this subject: Max Lowy, *Über eine Unruheerscheinung: die Halluzination des Anrufes mit dem eigenen Namen (ohne und mit Beachtungswahn)*, Separatdruck aus den *Jahrbüchern für Psychiatrie und Neurologie*, XXXIII Band, Leipzig u. Wien, Franz Deuticke, 1911. The title translates: On an Anxiety Manifestation: The Hallucination of being called by one's Name (without and with pathological disturbances of attention).

11. UFOs have been seen rising from and returning to the sea. Jung discusses the UFO as fish in 'Flying saucers: a modern myth of things seen in the skies', in *Civilization in Transition*, *Collected Works*, 10, New York, Pantheon Books, 1964. See also Lyall Watson's highly suggestive ruminations on underwater lights, squid and their large eyes, and ETs in his book *Gifts of Unknown Things*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1976, pp. 18-37.

12. Greta Woodrew, *On a Slide of Light*, New York, Macmillan, 1981, Hawks.

13. Gerald Heard, *The Riddle of the Flying Saucers*, London, Carroll and Nicholson, 1950, Bees.

14. At the deepest levels of the unconscious, everything is everything.

15. The region currently under investigation by several leading quantum theorists.

In order to give the full coverage we feel the Hopkins, Streiber and Good books deserve, we have held over our regular book review features, and shortened our readers' letters column. These will both be back, in full, in the next issue of *Magonia*.



THE ARCHETYPAL midnight hag on her broomstick has a comic Disney touch about her, a fact which did not always escape earlier students who were not above lampooning it. But at one time she was a grim reality, even if there was the occasional judge who ruled that nocturnal flights were not illegal.

We are talking about the supposed phenomenon of 'transvection', which is closely related, if at all distinguishable, to a whole variety of other subjects (no less controversial) for which there is yet reasonably good evidence. They include: traction, levitation, teleportation, bilocation, out-of-the-body experiences, and UFO abductions.

At an early date (10th century) the enlightened *Canon Episcopi* denied the existence of transvection, as a heretical throwback to heathenism. It explicitly denounced "wicked women ... who profess that in the dead of night they ride upon certain beasts with the pagan goddess Diana, and fly over vast tracts of country".

Such things, to be sure, are "only done in the spirit", and foolish indeed is he who believes that such fond dreams involve actual bodily activity. However, it was taken quite literally by post-mediaeval demonologists. Guazzo in 1626 voiced the opinion that "Sometimes witches are really conveyed from one place to another by the Devil, in the bodily likeness of a goat or some other fantastic animal, and are indeed physically present, at their nefarious sabbaths." It was, he added, a view "commonly held by theologians and lawyer among Catholics of Italy, Spain and Germany. It should however be noted that none of these ideas are indigenuous to this country. (Mexican magicians, according to the 16th century write Acosta, were also credited with aerial flights, metamorphosis at will into any shape, and ESP (Lawrence, p.67).

These ideas did not however meet with general acceptance even in the European countries of their origin, but it was argued in some quarters that even if only a delusion or dream, transvection was still to be construed as a crime of intent, deserving of summary punishment - in spite of St Augustine's expresses relief at not being responsible for his dreams!

Tartoretti in 1749 objected that participants in the sabbath, "if they feasted at their meetings ... ought to come back surfeited



## TRANSVLECTION AND UFOLOGY

Manfred Cassirer



and happy, instead of hungry and tired" and again, that they should be "able to escape from prison" with the same ease as they apparently left their bedrooms at night (Gurney, p.175, n.6). Tartoretti evidently failed to take into account the well-known fact that the Devil's food is worse than useless; in the words of one of the Pendle witches "... although they did eat, they were never the fuller nor better for the same." (Anglo, p.237)

Late mediaeval writers like Ulrich Molitor enforced the idea that the Adversary could, even in one's waking state, induce vivid hallucinations like nocturnal flights. As in saintly bilocation "at the precise moment that at man is in one place, nevertheless he is able to appear in spirit in another".

It mattered little to this argument, if such it can be called, whether the prospective travellers made their way on the traditional broomstick or some equally improbable implement (cleft stick, distaff or shovel) or even on an animal's back.

Meanwhile the application of an ointment is frequently mentioned. A fifteenth century prince, as 'illustrious' as anonymous, persuaded at witch to apply it experimentally. Predictably "nothing unusual happened" (Kitteridge, p.166) in spite of liberal helpings of the supposedly magical substance, although the woman professed great faith in its efficacy. In the case of Elizabeth Style, on the other hand, the flying ointment was said to have been effective in 1665.

Had not Jesus been carried to the top of a high mountain by the tempter, and was not Ezekiel taken up by his hair to be conveyed a long distance, to say nothing of Habbakkuk? Many divines - Luther, Bodin, Melancton - though that this should not be taken too literally, and that one's spirit only went to the sabbatha.

In 1560 Giambattista Porta once more demonstrated that the customary preparations for a trance-like state failed to dislodge the resting subject, while Dr Gassendi at least produced the illusion of transvection by administering drugs to a control-group. Among those with first-hand experience was Paulus Grillandus, the author of the influential *Tractatus de Hereticis et Sortilegiis* (1536), who had actually handled the ointment (Hoyt, p.61).



With regard to the subject of this study, one has to agree with Owen that there is no logical objection to the possibility of traction of the human body granted there is a force capable of moving inanimate static bodies. At its most effective level it may amount to actual levitation. In an extreme case Christina of Stommeln was with difficulty rescued from suffocation when a cloud suddenly descended on her while at prayer indoors and she found herself taken to a disused and muddy reservoir. The cover story was to put the blame on the Devil (who else?) trying to kill her by drowning (Thurston, p.13). Twice she is said to have been dragged from her bed, conveyed out of doors and tied to a tree.

In the Bromley Poltergeist Case a certain Mr Elms was twice involuntarily propelled forward in the writer's direction by an intangible force (Cassirer).

In 1647 the Devil in the shape of a Master of Arts carried away a scholar of St John's Cambridge: his gown was recovered from the river and he was never heard of again (Notestein, p.362).

When a man named Harrison mysteriously vanished in 1664, no one had yet heard of UFO abductions. Three people were hanged for his murder - rather prematurely as it turned out, since two years later the 'dead' man returned from Turkey, whence he had been spirited away by witchcraft. About the same time James Barrow of Southwark could not be apprehended by any means as he used to fade from the midst of his would-be captors like some latter day Elijah.

Towards the beginning of our own century a mediumistically gifted boy in Iceland, Indri Indriasson, was thrown from his bed after first being lifted up and pulled down to the floor. In the next stage he was forced 'head foremost through the door and along the floor in the outer room'; this in spite of clutching at everything in sight and being firmly secured by his legs by two men. This form of violent traction was exceptional, but of short duration. The data are regarded as satisfactory by Owen (Owen, p.207).

The dividing line between traction and levitation is a thin one, and in the Icelandic case actual levitation is indicated when it is stated that the boy was "balancing" in the air with his feet towards the window".

A mistaken belief in levitation

can sometimes be induced by an illusion shared by saints, witches and mediums among others. Still, one feels that Cotton Mather's subject, Margaret Rule, is too hastily dismissed by Owen, on account of alleged 'vagueness' in detail of the data. Apparently she was afflicted with veritable bouts of levitation: "One her tormentors pulled her up to the ceiling of the chamber and held her there before a very numerous company of spectators, who found it as much as they could all do to pull her down again." (Hansen, p.217)



Saint Joseph of Copertino

This seems therefore to have been a *bona fide* instance of the phenomenon for which Mather had gone to the trouble of collecting signed statements. Since none of her bodily parts were in contact with the bedstead, the raising of her body extending "a great way towards the top of the room", is precluded from being diagnosed as an *arc de cercle* in a hysterical fit.

Levitation is also associated with physical mediumship, and one need only mention the names of Stainton Moses, D. D. Home, Mirabelli, and the Schneiders. The evidence in connection with Home is virtually unassailable and testified to by Crookes.

Among Catholic saints, St Joseph of Copertino is outstanding, and the data relating to his levitating feats are convincing, and were a source of embarrassment to the Church in his lifetime.

"Alleged flights through the air to and from the witches convention may be set on one side as fictive", warns Owen in his discussion of teleportation.

His point is well taken. Bozzano, however, quotes an apparently trustworthy report by a missionary about a witchdoctor whose "spirit traversed a very considerable distance at night. While his body remained in a cataleptic state, a mysterious 'something' impinged realistically on the consciousness of a far-away native, and a pertinent message was conveyed.

Transvection was sometimes dismissed on the grounds that the experient's physical body was observed to be asleep or entranced concomitant with the reported adventure in time and space.

Once more on the borderline of the various themes, the alleged suspension in space must perhaps be sometimes ascribed to skillful gymnastics. In certain cases of 'hystero-demonopathic' epidemics young girls emulated the agility of squirrels.

Mary Longdon was hexed in 1661 according to Glanville's *Modern Relations*. She was sometimes "removed out of her bed into another room", apparently paranormally, or even "carried to the top of the house". Typical associated poltergeist phenomena suggest that this may have been a genuine case, though Owen has reservations.

An official report about a hexed girl, Francoise Fontain, asserts that she indulged in repeated flights of up to four feet, and



that it required the joint efforts of several men to bring her down. The circumstantial nature of the account makes a good impression. Summing up the evidence, Fodor says, "Transportation of human bodies through closed doors and over a distance is a comparatively rare but fairly well authenticated occurrence."

Though most parapsychologists would stop short of wholehearted agreement with Fodor's confident assessment, he is pointing the right way in describing it as "a composite phenomenon between levitation and apport", for both of which there is valid evidence.

Modern sceptics may doubt that the Revd. Robert Kirke of Aberfoyle was truly carried off by fairies in revenge for revealing their secrets. It was believed that those abducted sometimes returned as ghosts. Witches, of course, had no difficulty in overcoming the physical barriers of their homes, and Vallée, referring to "the archives of the Roman Catholic Church", surmises that "many accusations of witchcraft stemmed from the belief in strange beings who could fly through the air and approach humans at dusk or at night." (Vallée, p.62) Collective sightings even in daylight of weird configurations are neither rare nor necessarily extorted by torture-chamber confessions, nor confined to any one age.

Did not the Prince of Apostles (very much unlike the witches) thwart every effort to keep him in prison? In more modern times miracles of this kind are still alleged in some numbers. The Davenport brothers, for example, were "transported a distance of miles", while other mediums such as Mrs Guppy, Williams Hearne, Lottie Fowler and 'Dr.' Monk did at least as well several times.

Anthropological data lend credence to the seemingly incredible. The above mentioned African witch-doctor successfully contacted a native hundreds of miles away through rough terrain. De Windt knew of a medicine-man who disappeared from his tent while being watched, only to be found unconscious half a mile distant (Fodor).

Bilocation must be taken into consideration in spite of its apparent violation of natural law. Fodor defines it as "the simultaneous presence in two different places", with the proviso "mostly ... in histories of saints". Under this heading we may include the adventures of the Ven. Domenica del Paradiso who escaped to a cave where she

spent two nights (Thurston, p.1014). However, her absence failed to attract attention, as she was impersonated by an angel!

More amazing, yet at the same time better attested, are the feats of Sor Maria de Agreda who bilocated no less than 500 times (!) as far afield as Mexico, where she converted a native tribe and distributed rosaries (which as a matter of fact, had all vanished from her call). There were moreover other supporting indications that her visits to distant lands were not mere flights of fancy (Thurston, p.127)

Fodor elsewhere relates the phenomenon of the *doppelgänger*, a 'double' considered by him the "etheric counterpart of the physical body which, when out of coincidence, may temporarily move about in space in comparative freedom and appear in various degrees of density to others."

Perhaps this accounts for the fact that Alphonse de Liguori was able in 1774 to attend at the death-bed of Clement XIV according to witnesses while being imprisoned at Arezzo. If one can accept Aksakov's famous tale of the bilocation of Miss Sagée the school-mistress, this would amount to irrefutable evidence in favour of the syndrome.<sup>1</sup> Closely related to this phenomenon are out-of-the-body experiences which traditionally at least involve the concept of an 'etheric double' or 'astral body', supposedly "an exact replica of the physical body but composed of finer matter" (Fodor).

More objective evidence for such an idea is provided by the data for materialisation. If witches ever did traverse long distances (and one would dearly like to hear concrete evidence for this belief), an alternative incarnation would provide the ideal vehicle. Col. de Rochas conducted some suggestive experiments in this field in which a plastic phantom form was created. Induced projection of the 'double' is said to have succeeded in early tests, and more recently, the modern output on the subject is extensive and a comprehensive critique may be found in the work of Dr Blackmore.

The idea was ably championed by Ochrowicz: "The hypothesis of a 'fluid double' (astral body) which, under certain conditions detaches itself from the body ... appears necessary (my italics) to explain the greater part of the phenomena."<sup>2</sup> Henri de Siemiraski, artist and scientist, also spoke of the pragmatic necessity arising from

his experience of the "hypothesis of the duplication (*dédoublément*) of the medium" (ib. p.137).

We have come at last to the aspect of the greatest importance to ufology: abductions by UFOs. This subject has become of increasing interest and significance. Recent monographs by Scott Rogo (1980) and John Rimmer (1984) have been devoted to it. Here the flight is of an involuntary kind, over which the subject has no control apart from possible acquiescence. "With ever-increasing frequency", says C E Lorenzen (Story, p.2) "UFO researchers are encountering witnesses who claim not only to have sighted a UFO and its occupants, but to have been taken aboard".

This strange experience, which seems to be subjectively psychogenetic follows a predictably stereotyped pattern, unaccountably anticipated by science fiction. Its innocent victims are subjected to traumatic and at the same time mystic happenings under bizarre circumstances with alleged time-losses, possibly triggered off by geophysical or even quite trivial stimuli. Teleported to a strangely unrealistic environment, Betty Andreasson has encounters with non-human beings in a religiously inspired setting.

NOTES 1. For the most recent discussion of this enigma, see the *Unexplained*, 108, p.1250ff. 2. De Rochas, p.170, Julian Ochrowicz, a most experienced researcher, was referring to the physical effects observed by him in his investigation of Palladino.

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TIMOTHY GOOD

If Neil Kinnock can knock out an American Democratic presidential candidate thousands of miles away without so much as lifting a finger, perhaps it's not too far afield for an American ufologist to comment on Timothy Good's 'Above Top Secret'.

In drama, the fatal flaw of a character is often the essential ingredient around which the whole tragic recipe revolves. In the documentary or non-fiction world, however, it is just as often the slam of the oven door that causes the whole soufflé to collapse. The latter seems to be the case with ATS, a prodigious project ultimately marred by reliance on US government 'UFO' documents of a considerably dubious nature.

The appearance here of the controversial Majestic Twelve, or MJ-12, material relating to a reputed supersecret government UFO agency charged with unlocking the secrets of crashed and retrieved UFOs, along with their alien occupants, is doubly disappointing because it will inevitably detract from what in many regards is an otherwise impressive performance by Mr Good. If the MJ-12 documents in particular turn out to be a complete fabrication, as seems increasingly likely, the farrago will provide sceptics and professional debunkers alike with a new round of potent ammunition, aimed squarely at the 'best' that UFO proponents supposedly have to offer. What's more, they will not even have to pull the trigger; that and the smoking gun will have been provided them by Good in England and Moore and company in America.

## ABOVE TOP SECRET: BELOW TOP DRAWER

### Dennis Stacy

Battle lines in the USA have already been drawn. Oddly enough, the sceptics, e.g. Philip Klass, seem as content as the believers to dispute the validity of the material according to whether all the t's have been crossed and i's dotted. The result is similar to a recent mock trial held here in which a tribunal of Supreme Court judges argued over the authorship of Shakespeare's plays. In both instances the disputed documents exist. The question is whether they establish the existence of Shakespeare in one case, and UFOs in the possession of the American government in the other. The answers may be forever lost because of our inability in both instances to discover the process whereby the said documents were made public. In other words, where and from *whom* did the MJ-12 material originate?

Alas, none of our living sources are proving very helpful in the matter, which is not the same as saying they could be. Still, the mystery of *how* the MJ-12 papers came to be is getting largely overlooked in the race to establish secondary matters, whether they fulfil the form and content of similar documents from the same individuals and agencies of the era in question, and so on. My purpose is to see if we can't point scrutiny where it

belongs, namely at the original source of the documents themselves.

But first, a brief background of 'MJ-12'. The documents released by Good and William L. Moore (in association with Jamie Shandera, a Los Angeles TV producer, and ETH proponent Stanton Friedman), purport to be a briefing paper prepared by Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter (MJ-1) for president-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was succeeding Harry Truman in office. The cover page, dated '18 November, 1952' and headed 'National Security Information' was stamped 'Top Secret/Majic' and 'Eyes Only'. Page 2 characterized Operation Majestic-12 (Majic-12) as 'a TOP SECRET Research and Development/Intelligence operation responsible directly and only to the President of the United States'. Majic-12 had been established 'by special classified executive order of President Truman on 24 September, 1947, upon recommendation by Dr Vannevar Bush and Secretary James Forrestal'.

A list of all-male membership of Majic-12 followed, led off by Hillenkoetter, consisting of a veritable military and scientific Who's Who of the day, including noted UFO debunker and Harvard astronomer Donald H. Menzel (shades of Cedric Allingham!),

Generals Hoyt S. Vandenberg and Nathan F. Twining, Drs Detlev Bronk, Lloyd V. Berkner, Jerome Hunsaker and five others. On 22 May 1949, Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal ('MJ-3') had committed suicide while in hospital (more fodder for paranoids), and had subsequently been replaced by General Walter B. Smith. Space prohibits a consideration of all their credentials (see Good, pages 250-252), but those of Hillenkoetter, presumably the author of the MJ-12 documents, are particularly worth recounting. After a distinguished World War II career in Naval Intelligence, Truman appointed him Director of the new Central Intelligence Group, soon the CIA, on 1 May 1947, a post he held until 1950. More offices and awards followed. Hillenkoetter retired from the Navy in June 1957. In the same year he joined the Board of Governors of NICAP, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, which flourished during the 1950s as the largest civilian UFO group ever (membership at one point, 5000). The fact that the first director in CIA history would later help front a popular UFO group has been considered odd to say the least, and fueled many a midnight conspiracy theory. A better 'mole' could hardly be imagined.





Donald Menzel

"... shades of Cedric Allingham ..."

The Majic 'briefing' itself seemingly substantiates the Roswell incident reported in the book of the same name by William L. Moore and 'co-author' Charles Berlitz: 'On 07 July, 1947, a secret operation was begun to assure recovery of the wreckage of this object for scientific study. During the course of this operation, aerial reconnaissance discovered that four small human-like beings had apparently ejected from the craft at some point before it exploded. These had fallen to earth about two miles east of the wreckage site. All four were dead and badly decomposed due to action by predators and exposure to the elements during the approximately one week time period which had elapsed before their discovery.'

The paper also says that 'On 06 December, 1950, a second object, probably of similar origin, impacted the earth at high speed in the El Indio-Guerrero area of the Texas-Mexican border after following a long trajectory through the atmosphere. By the time a search team arrived, what remained of the object had been almost totally incinerated.'

The final page of the briefing was a table of contents listing eight attachments, 'A' to 'H', composed of Truman's original executive order establishing Majic-12, three status reports, a 'Preliminary Analytical Report', 'Blue Team Report #5', 'Contingency Plan MJ-1949-04P/78: 31 JAN '49', and 'Maps and Photographic Folio (Extractions)'. Of the eight attachments referred to, only 'A', Truman's executive

order addressed to the late Secretary of Defense, was included with the MJ-12 documents released to the public.

And that is Majic in a nutshell, more than enough to establish the validity of flying saucers from space, alien occupants, crash/retrievals, government cover-up and all the other UFO accoutrements of the last four decades, enough in fact to put ufology out of business forever. All that remained was to convince America's investigative journalists of the reality of the MJ-12 briefing papers; they in turn would alert the general public and responsible politicians, if such creatures there be, and before Philip Klass could say 'Bah! Humbug!' the truth with a capital T would be out, finally!

As events have evolved, however, none of us is out of a job, save Stuart Campbell, who's already provided his own solution to the UFO phenomenon anyway. The question remains: Whence the documents? As you might have guessed by now, none of the above-mentioned papers have surfaced in the Truman or Eisenhower Presidential Libraries, or the National Archives in Washington. Klass's counter-arguments have centred on misplaced commas, anachronistic terminology and similar printed peccadillos as proof of falsification. Moore et al. have retorted by resorting to negative proofs, since they can't prove the authenticity of the papers themselves. This involves mainly turning up similar gaffes in other papers of the times. What 'objective' evidence has surfaced is itself suspect, which we will get to in a moment.



Dr. Vannevar Bush  
Father of the Majestic 12?

Again, whence the documents? After devoting over 400 pages of text to a secondary matter (if, after all, Majic is real), Mr Good is strangely reticent on the MJ-12 papers themselves, which appear to have been added to ATS at the last moment. On page 250 MJ-12 itself is referred to only as 'information acquired from an intelligence source in 1985...'. His description of the subsequently surfacing MJ-12 papers is apparently in error here, as he refers to 'a nine-page document dated 18 September 1947...signed by... Truman'. As we have seen, the briefing paper itself was dated November 1952; only the executive order supposedly signed by Truman ('Attachment A') dated from September and even then Good has his dates mixed up; the actual copy reproduced in ATS (page 547) carries a date of September 24.

Two pages later Good notes: 'My enquiries into the authenticity of the Majestic 12 document during a research trip to the United States in 1986 have led me to believe that the group did indeed exist, and the document seems authentic enough. Unfortunately, all the members are now deceased, and my questions addressed to a former director of the CIA, as well as two ex-Presidents, remain unanswered, which is hardly surprising.' Elsewhere, MJ-12 is routinely referenced as an established bona fide fact by Good, with nary a glance over his shoulder. Back on page 250 and again on page 540, Good says copies of the actual documents were only made available to him in 1987. Then how did he enquire into the authenticity of the 'Majestic 12 document' during his 1986 research trip to the United States? The only answer is that he was enquiring into a *chimera* of MJ-12 initially, i.e. word of the agency's existence from an unnamed source.

William Moore, who first released the same MJ-12 documents to the press in the States, has more to say about their origins, but not much. In his own press release, dated 29 May 1987, Moore writes that 'the accompanying document arrived in the mail in a plain brown wrapper at the residence of Jaime Shandera in December, 1984'. ('Plain brown wrapper' in this country is a standard, stand-up comic reference to X-rated, or adult, material. Does this make MJ-12 the first confirmed example of UFO pornography?) Good gives us no clue as to the form in which he first received his MJ-12 material; Moore tells us it came to



Shandera as a roll of undeveloped film, a surprising medium that (cleverly?) leaves a lot to be desired in terms of effectively establishing the authenticity of its contents.

Shandera, it should be pointed out, was hardly a household name in American ufology until Moore's press release and his subsequent visibility at the MUFON symposium held at the American University in Washington, DC, in June 1987. Moore's turgid press announcement says only that in 1982, after he 'had worked more than a year and a half on his own, the three (Moore, Shandera and Friedman) teamed up on a research project that would take them further into the strange world of government involvement with Unidentified Flying Objects than anyone in the civilian field is known to have ever gone before'.

Moore and Friedman are both well-known UFO investigators, frequently before the public at large. It remains a minor mystery, then, why the unexposed roll of film with the MJ-12 document and Attachment A, apparently exactly the same material that Good received (in person?) an ocean away, was mailed to Shandera. Issues and origins were further complicated when Moore *et al.* presumably trying to flush out information by a sort of time-release capsule approach, mailed out various copies of the MJ-12 paper with their own simulated blackouts! Did Good receive one of these 'censored' copies via Moore or an intermediary? Since our UFO sleuths have fouled the well from which we all drink, we may never be able to straighten this one out unless the document is confirmed by a wholly independent third source. At this point it is almost superfluous to compare Good's version with Moore's, unless the principals are willing to provide a more accurate and detailed chronology of Majic events.

As if things were not complicated enough as it is, in printed comments on ATS Jenny Randles refers (*Northern UFO News* No. 126, July-August 1987, page 3) cryptically to having been approached 'by someone offering similar (but actually more extensive) files', while she was compiling the recent exclamation mark-filled 'The UFO Conspiracy'. But 'concerned...that it might be a "set up" [she] kept it out of the book, however dramatic it was'.

Meanwhile, the 'objective' evidence mentioned earlier

floated to the surface, from no less an authoritative source than America's own office of National Archives. Moore had learned that the NA was scheduling a periodic release of files to the public from the period in question and asked to be notified when a date was confirmed. Reportedly, he and Shandera were there on 'opening day'. After searching through file folders containing more than 1800 documents, nature called. While Moore was in the loo (presumably they took shifts), Shandera found a single page of paper, admittedly unrelated to anything else in the folder, that has since become known as 'the Cutler memorandum', after its 'author', Robert Cutler, Special Assistant to the President (Eisenhower).

Dated 14 July 1954, it is addressed to General Nathan Twining ('MJ-4') and headed 'TOP SECRET RESTRICTED/SECURITY INFORMATION' and 'SUBJECT: NSC/MJ-12 Special Studies Project'. NSC refers to National Security Council, the selfsame group of inner-circle presidential advisers that would later embarrass Ronald Reagan. The text of the one-paragraph letter says essentially that 'the President has decided that the MJ-12 SSP briefing should take place during the already scheduled White House meeting of July 16, rather than following it as previously intended'. The memorandum is seemingly authenticated by an official NA stamp in the lower left corner (see below). Even if the Cutler memorandum is real as found, it still does not establish the indisputable validity of Majic as a top secret UFO committee, only that a Special Studies Project MJ-12 did indeed exist. From the memorandum itself, MJ-12 could just as easily have concerned

the H-bomb or any other 'mundane' subject.

As with the preceding papers, however, arguments as to its validity have focused primarily on wording, watermarks, type-style, print colour and similar minutiae of holographic science. Klass found that Cutler was on a tour of European military bases during the disputed time period when he was supposed to have signed the memorandum. Moore counters that his assistants were left in charge, per normal operating procedure, with orders to clear his 'out' basket: signing Cutler's name to the document in question in no way invalidates its authenticity, and so on, one side scoring a minor point, the other retaliating with an equally minor victory.

As a result of ongoing publicity, so many Freedom of Information Act requests regarding MJ-12 have poured into the Archives that the agency felt compelled to issue an unprecedented report on the subject, denying, of course, any knowledge of same, or the possession of any additional documents.

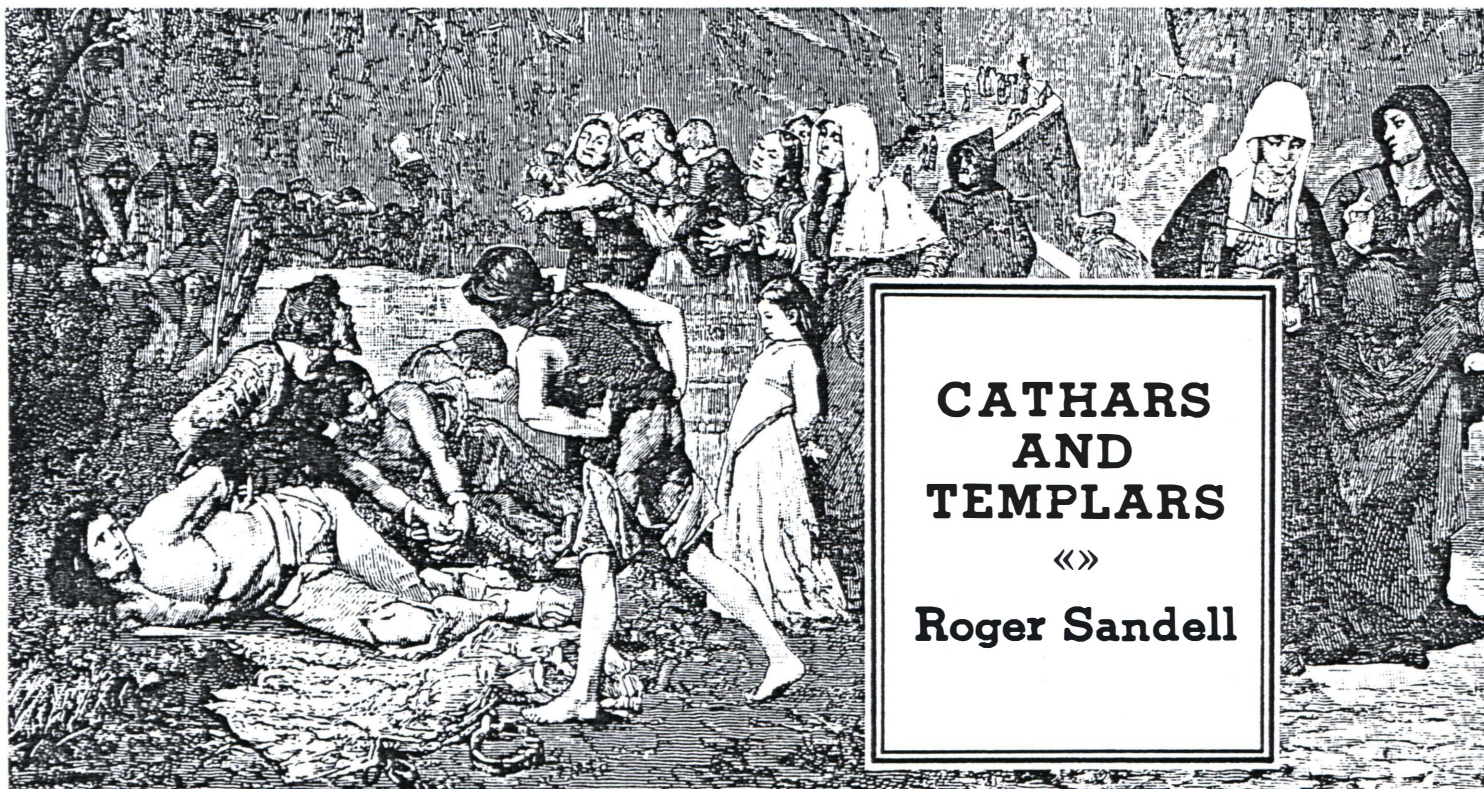
Meanwhile, the origins of the MJ-12 material slip slowly into the obscurity of history. While the hounds give hunt in one direction, the fox is back in the manor, tumbling the master's mistress in his own bed. Let the holographic chase proceed apace. But in parallel let's have a detailed and chronological account of the documents' origins from the principals involved in making them public.

At the moment the audience is concentrating on the performance itself. But behind every Majic act of note lies a master magician. ●●●

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## CATHARS AND TEMPLARS

«»

Roger Sandell

Southwest France in the 12th century was an area marked by a unique culture. It had first been civilised by Greek settlers, it had escaped the worst of the barbarian invasions. As a result it had preserved continuities with Roman civilization and it was a neighbour of Islamic Spain. It was also an area where the religion of the Cathars, regarded by the Church as a diabolic heresy, had been embraced by much of the population. As is often the case, Cathar theology may have been less important to many of its adherents than the assertion of a distinctive national identity by the adoption of a religion different from that of their neighbours, particularly the kings of France.

Catharism was one of a series of heresies that had surfaced since the early years of the Church that preached that the world was the creation of an evil demiurge not the true God. Salvation consisted of transcending the flesh and being reunited with God, rather than a future resurrection of the body that the Church looked forward to.

This combination of heresy and national consciousness excited the hostility of French kings and the Papacy, and by the beginning of the 13th century the Cathars were depicted as idolators and participants in orgies. In 1209 a crusade was launched against them, that proved to be the beginning of forty years of sporadic warfare that brought about the end of the Cathars and the distinctive culture in which they flourished.

As is so often the case, a lost cause exercised a fascination for subsequent generations. After the Reformation, some Protestant writers saw the Cathars as martyrs and precursors of the Reformation for their opposition

to Rome, although their beliefs had no more in common with the Protestant churches than the Catholic church. After the French Revolution and amid the political divisions of 19th century France the Cathars were rediscovered by writers who saw them as pioneers of anti-clericalism and anti-monarchism.

Those most keen to rediscover the Cathars were involved in the explosion of interest in occultism that began in France in the 19th century. In the hands of these writers the Cathars were transmuted from Christian heretics to occult masters, and their traces were found in unlikely locations. The tarot pack, which existed from the Middle Ages simply as a device for game-playing became a repository of the Cathar secret wisdom. The architecture of Southern French castles was studied for proof that they were really Cathar temples.

The first part of *The Treasure of Montsegur* is devoted to an examination of the growth of the Cathar myth and the collection of occultists and eccentric scholars

who fostered it from the 19th century to the 1930's. The story told has many parallels with the growth of the Druid myth in Britain which also seized a limited number of historical facts about a defeated culture and interpreted them in nationalist, romantic or occultists ways.

At the heart of the Cathar myth lay the tale of a mysterious treasure, said to have been spirited away from their stronghold at Montsegur before it fell. Occultists searched for it in caves, and variously believed it to be the Holy Grail or a lost Gospel. This aspect of the story has many parallels with other hunts for mysterious treasures by occultists and fringe theorists (it is curious how those who claim to be anti-materialist seem to be so keen on validating their beliefs by discovering material objects). The search for a variety of mysterious objects by Andy Collins and his associates is a contemporary example, and such quests are favourite themes of pop occultism, from *Dungeons and Dragons*-type games to *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (indeed one 1930's searcher for the treasure of Montsegur, Otto Rahn, occultist, mountaineer and SS officer, seems straight out of that film).

R. A. Gilbert describes all of this in interesting detail and in the end he touches on more recent incarnations of the Cathar myth, Arthur Guirdham the Bath psychiatrist who has made



the surprising discovery that the prolems of most of his patients seem to stem from being reincarnated Cathars, and the appearance of the Cathars in *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*. I would have been interested to see more on this part of the story since in a talk he recently gave, Gilbert convincingly demolished part of the underpinning of that book, showing that the alleged mysterious decorations of the church at Rennes-la-Chateau are in fact in keeping with church furnishings of the period, and the cost of its building was raised by local churchgoers, not some mysterious occult brotherhood.

The second half of the book is devoted to an examination of the roots of Catharism, seeing it as part of an alternative Christian tradition going back to New Testament times. Without detailed knowledge of early Christian history it is difficult to comment on this section in detail. However, his conclusion, that the treasure of Montsegur was in fact the escape of sufficient Cathars from the stronghold to maintain the transmission of the doctrine to future generations is, whether or not historically correct, in line with the archetype of the treasure which lays undetected because it is of a quite different nature to what the treasure seekers assume.

Also with strong mythic and archetypal overtones is the epilogue by the book's co-author Walter Birks, who described how he became involved in the 1930's Cathar revival, and after becoming disillusioned with others involved, served in the Middle East in World War II. Here he discovered the Syrian Muslim sect of the Nosairi who preserve traditions very similar to the Cathars, and who unlike other claimants to Cathar wisdom do have a genuine continuity of doctrine to the Middle Ages. Here again, whether or not there is anything in the suggestion that these ideas may have been imported to France by returning crusaders, this account resembles the recurring myth of the pilgrim searching in vain for wisdom or enlightenment only to stumble over it by accident.

Half a century after the crushing of the Cathars, French kings and Popes saw their authority being challenged from another source, the Knights Templar. The story of the Knights is told in Edward Burman's study. They had originally been formed as a crusading order to protect pilgrims to the Holy Places, but with the loss of the Holy Land

returned to Europe. Here they became a military elite with no clear function and nor usefulness to anyone but its own members, and as such a potential source of trouble. Their military power was complimented by financial power since they acted as bankers and received bequests from the wealthy.

It was hardly surprising that they made enemies. When the French king and the Pope moved to suppress them in 1314 the reasons given were the same as those cited for the persecution of the Cathars: accusations of being idol worshipper and engaging in satanic orgies. The evidence for these charges were confessions that were contradictory, extracted under torture and in many cases repudiated later by those who had made them. As a result the Templars were executed *en masse* but as with the Cathars, their execution proved to be the beginning of a legend that has persisted to the present day.

Peter Partner's book is largely concerned with that legend, the development of which is rather different from that of the Cathars. While the austerity and saintliness of many of the Cathar clergy enabled them to be claimed as forerunners by later religious reformers, the wealthy, aristocratic and warlike Templars were hardly promising in this respect.

However, it was just those aspects of the Templars that appealed to another audience. In 18th century Europe the traditional aristocracy was being replaced by new elites drawn from the merchant class. Monarchs created new orders of chivalry to legitimise these new elites and cement their loyalty, while Freemasonry cast an air of mystery and tradition over the new elites' increased distance from Christianity, and their fondness for clubs and similar institutions. In these circumstances the Templars were rediscovered and their origins in the Holy Land were seen as proof that they had preserved their secret traditions from biblical times. After their destruction these traditions had been maintained by guilds and other secret societies, which had transmitted them to the Masons.

With the reaction against the idea of the enlightenment following the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars a new stage was added to the Templar legend. Some clerical writers took seriously the claims of Templar origins made by Masonic and quasi-masonic groups, and proclaimed secularism and radicalism as the latest fruits of the diabolic Templars, who in turn were seen as part of an unbroken line of satanic opponents of Christianity embracing the Cathars and earlier



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heretics. Some Radicals took up this argument but reversed it so the Templars became precursors of anti-clerical and democratic ideas. The French occult revival saw yet more interest in the Templars, and Aleister Crowley's many secret societies included a Templar Order.

The myth can be traced onward into the 20th century. Nesta H. Webster, whose 1920's works *World Revolution; the plot against civilization*, and *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements* are key texts in the development of the modern ultra-right, revived the idea of the continuity between Cathars, templars and modern revolutionaries, although this idea seems to have had little influence on the right-wing groups that still distribute her writings in Britain and America. (Although the Templars do put in an appearance in the demented and constantly shifting conspiracy theories of the ultra-right wing American millionaire Lyndon LaRouche.) By contrast the curious French cult of Synarchy which flourished between the wars and had some influence on the Vichy regime saw the Templars as an idealised theocratic elite in whose steps they hoped to follow.

The myth's influence has not been confined to politics: T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* was partly inspired by *From Ritual to Romance*, by Jessie Weston, a book offering a highly dubious interpretation of the Grail legend and Templar traditions. British earth-mysteries researchers probe the alleged symbolism of Templar churches. *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* has taken the Templars into the best-seller lists, and most recently a study of the Shroud of Turin has claimed it to be the mysterious idol the Templars were accused of worshipping. The legends are still very much alive.

GILBERT, R.A. and Walter BIRKS, *The Treasure of Montsegur*, Crucible, 1987, £6.99

BURMAN, Edward, *The Templars, Knights of God*, Crucible, 1986, £6.99

PARTNER, Peter, *The Murdered Magicians; the Templars and their myth*, Crucible, 1987, £6.99

Crucible is a new paperback imprint from Thorsons. It certainly deserves to succeed if it can continue to publish books by writers who can treat subjects so obscured by dubious claims with scepticism and scholarship while at the same time remaining sensitive to their appeal and their real place in the history of ideas.

R.S.

## LETTERS



### PLEBEAN SPIRITS

In his review of *Independent Spirits: Spiritualism and the English Plebeians 1850-1910*, Roger Sandell is in error in saying G J Holyoake was tried for blasphemy in 1840. He was in fact arrested on June 3, 1842 and charged with blasphemy on the basis of an address he gave in Cheltenham on March 24 of that year, during the course of which he suggested the deity be put on half pay. For this 'crime' he was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

Whether the Holyoake trial constituted a *cause celebre* is debatable, though no doubt its victim thought so, for soon after release from prison he produced a book on it with the misleading title, *The Last Trial by Jury for Atheism*. He had not been tried for atheism but for blasphemy. No was his trial the last, as within weeks of his verdict Thomas Patterson was also charged with blasphemy, his trial being on January 27, 1843, ten days before Holyoake was released. Patterson was found guilty and on refusing to pay a fine was sent to prison for a month. He was again charged with the same offence on November 8, in Edinburgh, this time receiving the vindictive sentence of fifteen months felon's treatment in Perth prison.

There have been, and are, many spiritualists, though some do not like this descriptive term, who apart from having a belief in survival are atheists and free-thinkers, and there was even a short-lived Australian spiritualist and freethought weekly, *Spiritual Enquirer*, published at Sandhurst, Victoria, from 1874 to 1875.

The freethought element in spiritualism continues, and one of the latest works I have met with representing this side of it is *Son Jesus and Big Father*, by Alex Gardner (New Horizon, 1984), which has all the characteristics of the hard hitting biblical criticism associated with freethought, but written in a far more humorous vein than most such material.

Yours faithfully  
R W Morrell, Nottingham

### CAMPBELL'S SOUP

I was please to read in *Magonia* 27 that Steuart Campbell has finally (after several attempts) 'solved the UFO problem'.

Naturally we ufologists all owe Mr Campbell a great debt for saving us from the time and trouble of investigating mirages which show up on radar screens, stall car engines and force witnesses to believe they have been 'abduct-ed'. However, I really must take Mr Campbell to task over his claim that the Lowtherville, Isle of Wight UFO (19 May 1985) was a mirage of the planet Saturn. As Mr Campbell knows, this cannot be a plausible explanation for the report because the object:

a) was observed during completely overcast weather conditions (according to coastguard records and the witnesses own testimony);

b) was observed against background features (houses, trees, etc.);

c) moved through a 180° line of sight, disappearing *behind* the witness over a fence; and

d) made a 'swishing' noise as it passed by the witness.

I would be more impressed with Mr Campbell's over-enthusiastic claim had he not written to me *before* reading my full case report to BUFORA informing me that it was a simple misidentification of the star Antares.

Yours sincerely

Paul Fuller, Romsey, Hants.

### Steuart Campbell replies:

Sarcasm is insulting; I did not claim that mirages "show up on radar, stall car engines ..." etc. Regarding Lowtherville I proposed an explanation for a report, investigation of which is hardly complete. Fuller made no detailed study of the witnesses movements and location at various points during the incident, he provided no detailed plan, no photographs and no weather chart (in the published report which I have seen). His assessment was that the object was a RVP [remotely piloted vehicle], but he provides no direct evidence in favour of this hypothesis. Above all Fuller ignored the golden rule (clause 7.A(4) in BUFORA's own investigation manual); he took the report at face value! It is not certain that Fuller's claims (a - d) are correct, and I suspect that they are not.

Steuart Campbell,  
Edinburgh.



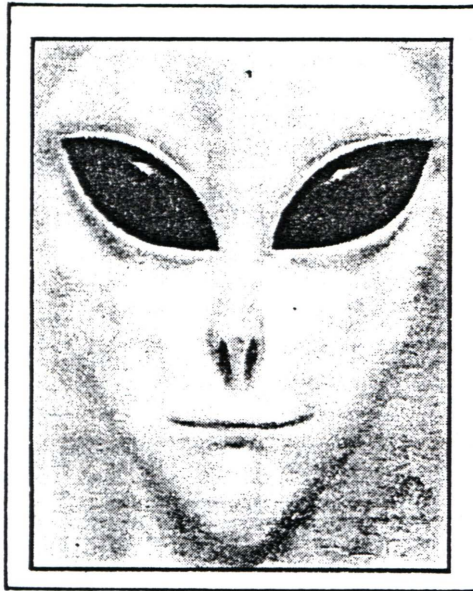
experiences into a smooth narrative, the fragmented and disjointed quality of such experiences cannot be disguised.

Even before his 'abduction' Streiber's life followed the classic confused pattern we have seen in a hundred other abduction and contact cases. He seems a restless character, moving house on a whim, or roaming Europe in a dream-like state. There are a number of childhood incidents, fragmentarily remembered and elliptically described, which raise serious and disturbing questions as to the psychological impetus behind aspects of his abduction experience.

Unusually, Streiber feels that his principal 'contact' was female. This entity subjects him to a form of mechanised anal rape. No doubt this account will cause a great deal of hilarity amongst some, and a vast amount of pseudo-Freudian backyard psychoanalysis amongst others. Perhaps the best comment on it comes from our American correspondent, Martin Kottmeyer, writing in *Jim Moseley's Saucer Smear*: "How could [one] fail to appreciate the undercurrents of powerlessness in Streiber's writings, and how it shaped the narrative, e.g. in the pseudo-homosexual rape."

Streiber is the ultimate victim: moving to a new neighbourhood, he is harassed by weird figures pouring through the windows of his apartment, the streets ring with eerie cries - the scene increasingly resembles a Charles Bronson 'Death Wish' urban nightmare. Streiber's life and fiction seems totally concerned with a variety of contemporary fears - social and environmental - which increasingly portray humanity as victims of greater and more sinister forces. His visitors seem at once to embody these forces, in the way they dehumanise the abductee, and in some strange way offer a resolution to his terror.

He becomes annoyed with investigators who do not accept his own interpretation of his experiences: "I am increasingly becoming certain that there are large elements of the UFO community who cannot successfully address the issue of abductions". Recently he has very forcibly announced his total disenchantment with the ufological community. He has set up a network of abductees who discuss their experiences and counsel each other, and which seems to be operating almost as an abductees' trade union, protecting its members from investigators who "would probably swim in like



sharks, feeding on [them]". Obviously, once such a network has been set up we are moving out of the area of scientific investigation, and into aspects of group psychotherapy. No objective 'ufological' research into the abduction phenomena can take place under such circumstances. We should perhaps consider further whether this is or is not a bad thing

Bud Hopkins takes a direct view of the abduction experience. Here there is none of the philosophical self-doubt, nor any of the painful self-examination of Streiber's account. Here the abductions are the work of ET's in nuts-and-bolts spaceships which land in back-gardens in Indiana and do unspeakable things to the locals.

According to Hopkins, the ETs are engaged in a programme of genetic experimentation and interbreeding with humankind. The techniques used seem closer to artificial insemination in the farmyard than what we may imagine of an advanced extraterrestrial race. This extremely unpleasant process seems to have happened to many thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of women throughout America, although most apparently do not yet realise it. By coincidence most of those who do know what has happened to them are friends of friends of Mr Hopkins, or have read his previous book. However, the cases we know about are apparently only the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

If my approach to Hopkins's book may seem flippant, such flippancy is aimed at the author's naive approach. There is certainly nothing to be flippant about in the traumatic experiences that many women do seem genuinely to

have undergone (or rather recall under hypnotic regression). It seems that most of the cases which have come Hopkins' way have been people responding to his earlier book, *Missing Time*, or to numerous radio and TV broadcasts

Along with Streiber's best selling book, and the introduction of abduction themes into popular soap-operas, we may reasonably assume that there are very few people in the US who are not now aware, in broad outline at least, of the form of the abduction experience, and know the correct responses to make under hypnosis. No wonder we seem to have an American abduction epidemic.

In taking the hypnotic narratives so literally, and in seeking out ever more abductees, Hopkins is heading rapidly along a dangerous road. It now seems almost certain that anybody, particularly a woman, has had some puzzling, anomalous experience at some stage in her life, and who undergoes hypnotic regression to find the cause of it, is going to come up with a story involving artificial insemination by alien creatures. Can you imagine the long-term effect this may have?

It is only recently that the public in general has become aware of the psychic damage caused by rape, which is at least an assault by another human being: can anyone imagine the trauma that must be caused by the belief that a rape had been performed by an alien, inhuman entity; or the attitude a woman who believes she has undergone such an experience may adopt to any children she subsequently bears? Yet this is just what Hopkins is encouraging people to believe! I find it hard to imagine anything more dangerous.

These books only tend to confirm my suspicion that the time is coming when ufologists should get out of the abduction business. It is increasingly clear that it has little to do with unknown phenomena, and everything to do with well-known psychological processes. We are not trained psychotherapists. We have no right to subject people to what is in effect mental rape. If ufologists do not proceed very carefully we shall most certainly deserve Streiber's description of us as 'sharks'. \*\*\*

\* STREIBER, Whitley. *Communion* Century, London, 1987. £10.95

HOPKINS, Bud. *Intruders: the incredible visitations at Copley Woods*. Random House, New York. \$17.95